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BEYOND THE RIVER.

BY HAL LOWELL.

I look beyond the river, broad and free,
And, rising in unbroken lines,
Like mighty hosts of armed men, I see
The solemn, spectral pines.

Year after year the roses bud and blow,
And still upon the river's banks,
Loyal they stand in spite of frost and snow,
And all unthinned their ranks.

I see their neighbors leafless stand, a-cold,
A-cold and shivering—the rain
Drives fiercely through their branches gray and old—
And smites their heads a-main.

They had their little day of triumph sweet,
And in the fullness of their pride,
Scorned these old sentinels in mail complete,
Guarding the river's side.

I watched the golden summer come and go,
And still in grand, unbroken lines,
Loyal they stand, in spite of frost and snow
The army of the pines.

The White Witch: OR, THE LEAGUE OF THREE.

A STRANGE STORY OF AMERICAN LIFE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "HEART OF FURE," "WOLF DEMON,"
"SCARLET HAND," "ACE OF SPADES," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

WEAVING THE WEB.

TULIP and Stoll looked at O'Connel in astonishment, but replied not to his plainly put question.

"Come, gentlemen, your answer?" said O'Connel, impatiently, finding that they did not speak. "Do you know I fancy that if Montgomery had the same cause for revenge against you that you have against him, and a kind friend—like myself—were to place in his hands the weapons of vengeance that I offer you, he would not hesitate long about accepting, cold, 'canny' Scotchman as he is, though he was born in America, and the blood of two nations runs in his veins."

"I, for my part, can not answer at present," said Tulip, with considerable hesitation.

"Nor I," muttered Stoll.

"You require time?"

"Yes," both answered, in a breath.

"To think it over, eh?"

"Yes," again replied Tulip, and Stoll nodded assent.

"No, gentlemen, do not try to deceive me. I am not worthy to be your chief, if I could be deceived so easily."

Tulip and Stoll looked at each other. The masks upon their faces hid a strange expression.

O'Connel noticed the look.

"I say chief, because in this League of Three I am to be the chief. It was my brain that conceived the idea of the league. Alone—each acting for himself—we are powerless against our common enemy. Like Napoleon, he would beat us in 'detail.' But leagued together—a brotherhood of three, each for all, and all for one, like the Three Musketeers of Dumas—we can pull him down from his proud position in the world and trample him beneath our feet," said the Irishman, calmly and smoothly.

Tulip and Stoll listened in amazement. They felt the force of O'Connel's words.

"And now, gentlemen, I'll tell you why you require time and can not answer my question at once," continued the Irishman. "In the first place, you, Stoll, have made up your mind to see Montgomery and try, if possible—to crawl out of the extremely awkward position in which your own acts have placed you."

Stoll started with astonishment. O'Connel had guessed his very thought.

"And you, Tulip," continued O'Connel, who did not seem to notice the evident embarrassment of the stout broker, though it was evident from the quick, exulting flash of his eye that Stoll's confusion had not been unobserved by him, "you hesitate to reply, now, because you doubt the truth of my words—and of your own senses, for you are not blind, nor a fool—in regard to Miss Chauncy, and you have determined to learn the truth from her own lips."

Tulip could not repress a motion of astonishment.

O'Connel's lip curled curiously; a second time his guess was right.

"You do not reply, gentlemen," he said, in his quiet, easy way. "My words are true, then, since you do not deny what I have stated. Now I can save you the trouble of carrying out your resolutions by telling you that you will fail."

Again, Tulip and Stoll looked at each other with eyes full of wonder.

"Montgomery will not give you, Stoll, one single inch of vantage; and the fair Frances, Tulip, will treat you in a most scornful manner and will refuse to satisfy you in any one particular," O'Connel spoke as lightly as if he were relating a pleasant jest, and yet his words were like hands playing upon the life-chords of two human hearts.

"And as you can read the future so well, can you tell us what we will do after we meet with these disappointments?" asked Tulip, in a tone slightly sarcastic.

"You will come to me and accept my assistance. Then we will form the League of Three and fight this single man," replied O'Connel, firmly.

"You are sure of this?" and a light laugh came from under Tulip's mask, as he asked the question, yet the ring of the laugh sounded hollow and false.

"Yes," and the Irishman spoke with a

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Come, gentlemen, the seals—three drops of blood!" cried the man in white.

what he has done. And as for the lady—there are no true women now-a-days—she is young, pretty and proud; an arrant flirt, and without the slightest bit of a heart. She has loved Tulip and has tired of him. She fancies that she now loves this Montgomery; she will hold to that fancy until she sees some one else that she will "fancy" that she loves better. Then good-bye to Mr. Montgomery. And such creatures are the ones that we men love with all our passions and call "angels" when, half the time, there is more of the lower world in their natures than the upper one. And yet I am as great a fool as the rest, for I love, too." And then he laughed, cynically. "How I hate this Montgomery!" he said, suddenly. "From love to hate, a quick transition and one that is made more than is dreamed of in this world. I have laid my plans skillfully. I'll pull this man down until he grovels at my feet. These two men, Tulip and Herman Stoll, shall find me money. I myself have the tool wherewith to carve out my vengeance, and that tool is a woman. The old Turk was right when he said that women are at the bottom of every thing in this world. My siren shall lure him to destruction; lead him along the path that my hand will dig full of pitfalls." A hoarse laugh of triumph completed the sentence.

It was strange that Montgomery should receive warning that danger lurked in his life-path," said O'Connel, musingly, as the words of the young man came back to his mind. "Possibly an idle jest—a masquerading joke. It is odd, though, that it hit the truth so well. Now, I'll to my post on the balcony. In a few short minutes the League will be formed, and then for vengeance on the man that I hate so bitterly!"

After Tulip's departure, O'Connel turned to Stoll, who had remained, motionless.

"And are you not disposed to 'interview' Mr. Montgomery and find out whether I have spoken truth or no?" he asked.

The German, who was, apparently, deep in thought, lifted up his head at the words.

"Yonder he is, dressed as Hamlet," and O'Connel indicated Montgomery as he spoke.

"Yes, I see him," said Stoll, slowly.

"Your interview will be a short one; you'll find him more of a 'Shylock' than a 'Hamlet' to-night," and O'Connel laughed as he spoke.

Stoll shivered. The cool words of the Irishman seemed to chill him like the touch of ice.

"You'll find me on the balcony."

Stoll mumbled something indistinctly, and then he hurried away.

"Shallow fools!" muttered O'Connel, his lip curling in disdain, "as if it needed witchcraft to fathom the thoughts in their minds or to guess what action Montgomery or delicate Frances Chauncy will take in this matter! Montgomery despises Stoll, because it is in his nature to despise any thing that is mean and low. He has Stoll on the hip and he'll make him sweat for

the strange mask, did not notice the approach of Stoll.

Montgomery was perplexed.

"What the deuce can it mean?" he muttered. "It seems more like a dream than a reality. Within one month or one year, love, wealth, all will disappear—all vanish. My friends will desert me. The woman that I love will forsake me. No, no, I am a fool to give such weight to idle words. Frances Chauncy is the woman that I love, and I'd stake my life upon her faith."

Unconsciously, Montgomery was uttering his thoughts aloud. Hardly had he finished the sentence ere a clear voice whispered in his ear:

"And lose it!"

For a moment Montgomery was transfixed with astonishment. Then, with an effort, recovering from his amazement, he turned.

The voice that spoke the words was familiar to him. It was the voice of the White Witch.

But no white figure met Montgomery's eyes as he turned.

A slender female form, dressed in the dark robes of "Night," stood nearest to him.

"She may have changed her domino," muttered the young man, to himself; "I beg your pardon—did you speak to me?" he asked, of the dark figure.

The lady answered not, but with a movement of alarm retreated from him and disappeared in the crowd.

"Well, I've managed to frighten her," Montgomery muttered, with a laugh. "Evidently I got hold of the wrong person. Deuced strange where the voice came from, though."

CHAPTER V.

THE GLOVE OF SILK AND HAND OF IRON.

By the time Montgomery had finished his speech, Stoll, who had been circling round, like a great bird of prey circles around its quarry, finally made up his mind to attack him.

"Enjoying yourself, Mr. Montgomery?" he asked, in his smoothest way.

"Sir?" said Montgomery, turning in hauteur toward the German. He had recognized the voice in an instant.

"I asked if you were enjoying the masquerade," said Stoll, a little nettled at the tone used by the young man.

"I do not see how my enjoyment or non-enjoyment concerns you in any way," replied Montgomery, haughtily.

Stoll bit his thick lip to repress the anger that he did not dare to give utterance to.

The words of Montgomery cut him to the quick, but the German had little idea of what was in store for him.

"I believe that you wished to see me," said Stoll, servilely. Since he was not strong enough to fight, he must bend.

"Yes, I suppose you can guess why I wished to see you, for of course you are well aware that I do not count you among the gentlemen whom I term my friends!"

More gall and wormwood for Stoll.

"I suppose I know," he answered, slowly. "Lest there should be any misunderstanding upon that point, I will recapitulate the circumstances that led to this interview."

Stoll bowed assent, but bit his thick lip until the blood crimsoned his ugly, yellow teeth. It was well for him that the mask hid his face.

"By some means you became a member of my club, probably through the ignorance of the gentlemen who compose that club as to who and what you were; even in these days, when money-bags are worshiped as gods and half the world bows to a golden idol, there are some things in this world that money can not cover. In the club-room you met me; you forced your society upon me. I possessed a trotting horse, reputed to be one of the fastest in New York. That horse I kept for my own amusement, not for racing purposes, for I am neither a horse-jockey nor a 'black-leg.' You also owned a trotter. One that you fancied was the equal of mine. At least you said so, openly, and boasted that I did not dare to speed my horse against yours. Your boasts became the talk of the club. My friends became indignant and urged me to break my resolution and match my horse against yours. At last I consented to do so, provided you would put up five thousand dollars against five thousand of mine. The winner of the race to give one-half of the stake to some charitable object. And so the match was made. So far, so good. Now comes the sequel. You did not dream that I would take up your challenge, but after having made it, you could not retreat without losing caste. You did not think your horse could beat mine, but resolved to be certain. You went to my training stable on Long Island. You bought my trainer to your interest. He speeded the horse for you, and he beat the best time that your animal had ever made by some thirty seconds. You saw that in a square race you had no chance to save your money. Then, in order not to lose the paltry five thousand dollars that you had wagered, you offered my trainer a thousand dollars to allow my horse to be 'doctored,' or, in plainer words, poisoned. The poor, weak fool, who thought more of money than he did of his own conscience, agreed to poison the horse for you two nights before the race; and as the match was 'play or pay,' you thought yourself safe to humble me and save your own money. Thanks to an honest stable-boy, your scheme was revealed to me. My dishonest trainer was caught in the very act of poisoning the horse—that was last night. I was telegraphed for at once. When I arrived he confessed every thing. Now then, what shall I do? Shall I publish it to the world that Mr. Herman Stoll has sunk himself so low as to endeavor to commit a crime that will forever lose him the company of decent men; and shall I proceed against him in due course of law, and at-

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tempt to punish him for the outrage that he would have committed?"

Stoll's breath came thick and hard. Above all things in life he valued the opinion of the world.

"No, no, I'll do any thing you say, if you'll only hush the matter up," he gasped.

"Do you know why I feel inclined to 'hush' the matter up, as you term it?" asked Montgomery.

"No, I do not," answered Stoll, who knew very well that the reason could not concern him.

"It is on account of the poor devil that your money seduced to betray the master who had always treated him like a man. He has a wife and family and is a poor man. Your money tumbled him down from honesty—as many a better man than he has tumbled before. Now, if I turn that man adrift on the world with his character stained, what will be his fate?"

"He'll go to the dogs, most likely," answered Stoll, coarsely.

"Exactly, and if that man does turn to evil ways, on whose soul lies the guilt? Is he the guiltier one—a poor, weak fool, tempted by your money—or you, the knave, that tempted him to sin?"

"Knave!" cried Stoll, fiercely, in sullen wrath.

"Yes, knave!" repeated Montgomery, sternly. "Were I not a gentleman and could find it in my heart to act the part of a bruiser—I'd take you by the throat and dash you down to the dust from which you sprung!"

Every muscle of Montgomery's powerful form swelled with indignation as he spoke. Stoll curled his wrath as well as he was able. He knew that he was no match for the stalwart, Montgomery.

"Well, what do you want me to do, for I suppose you do want me to do something; unless you wished this interview solely for the purpose of bullying a man whose hands are tied and who can't strike back," Stoll said, sullenly.

"You are the first person in this world who has ever accused Angus Montgomery of being a bully; but we'll let that pass. As you have guessed, I do wish you to do something. The ruin of that man—whom I am about to cast out to the mercy of the world, for I can not find it in my heart to keep in my employ one who has betrayed me—hangs heavy upon my conscience. It is you who have ruined that man. I have determined to make you give him means by which for a time he can live. I don't mean that he shall go to the devil, per express. I think that with a fair chance he'll make an honest man again. You have led him into the mire of evil; it is but fair that you should pull him out again."

"What do you wish me to do?" growled Stoll, in a very unamiable voice.

"Give that man five thousand dollars to start him again in the world. With that sum he can go West, buy a farm, and become a respectable member of society once more," answered Montgomery.

"Five thousand dollars!" exclaimed Stoll, in amazement.

"That's the sum, exactly, and in addition, you must retire from the club that you have disgraced. Fulfill these conditions, and I'll hold my tongue. Refuse, and to-morrow I'll have you published in every paper in the country for the scoundrel that you are."

Stoll's wrath almost choked him, but, like the wolf in the pitfall, he felt that he was impotent to fly or fight. Above all things in life, he valued the position that he had managed to obtain in New York. He knew well that fully one-half of his associates, if not all, would turn their backs upon him were his deed to be made public. Even New York society has some self-respect, though, from its action, one would not be apt to think so.

"Well, I accept, though the conditions are hard ones. Perhaps, some time, Mr. Montgomery, you may get into debt. All the ill-luck I wish you is, that your creditor may be as hard as you are in this case," Stoll said, in ill-humor.

"When I act like a scoundrel, I trust that I may be treated like one," Montgomery replied, with bitter emphasis. Stoll winced at the words.

"Send me your check for the money, and then you can consider the affair settled," Montgomery added.

"Very well," Stoll said, doggedly.

"By the way, one word," Montgomery exclaimed, as Stoll was about to turn away. "I suppose that it is hardly necessary to mention that in the future, when we meet, I would prefer that you should pass me by without noticing me. By so doing, you will be spared the unpleasantness of being 'cut' by me, for I give my word that I shall never be able to see you, large as you are."

Then Montgomery passed away, and was soon lost amid the crowd of maskers.

Stoll ground his teeth in bitter rage.

"Curse him!" he cried. "I'll be even with him for this, if it takes me all my life. That infernal O'Connell spoke truth. I'll join him to be revenged upon this Montgomery. He's waiting on the balcony. He said in fifteen minutes. He's right almost to a second."

With bitter thoughts and an angry face, Stoll took his way toward the door leading to the moonlit balcony.

Tulip Roche proceeded slowly along through the crowded room, to where Frances Chauncy sat, watching the dancers.

"Good-evening," said Tulip, approaching the blonde beauty.

"Is that you, Tulip?" said Frances, languidly.

"I will return in an instant. Shall I conduct you to a seat?"

"Yes, are you tired?"

"Of moving around?—yes."

"Wasn't that Mr. Montgomery with you a moment or two ago, dressed as 'Hamlet'?"

"Yes."

"Frances, do you know I do not think that you have treated me right, lately?" Tulip said, leaning over the back of her chair.

"Indeed!—how?"

"I have heard strange reports regarding you and this Montgomery—"

"Well, what have you heard?" interrupted Frances, a little more like a maid in her manner.

"That you are engaged to him."

For a moment Frances did not reply. She tapped her pretty little foot upon the floor, and bit her lower lip perversely. Then suddenly she raised her head, and spoke.

"Suppose that it is the truth?" she asked, half defiantly.

"Is it the truth?" Tulip questioned, earnestly.

"Well, I—" and the beauty paused in evident confusion.

"It is true, then, and your words to me—your vows—are all forgotten!" Tulip cried, in deep agony.

"Why, I didn't know that you were in earnest. I thought that it was only a flirtation—I never did so before with any one—we can always be friends—I—and—"

Frances came to an end in terrible confusion.

"Oh, of course it was all a flirtation," Tulip said, bitterly; "I never meant one word of what I said, when I told you that I loved you, and wished you for my wife. I only meant it as a joke—and a very pleasant one it has been, too—I—" Tulip turned away; his voice became husky and choked in his throat.

Frances rose in confusion, and without even a farewell word, left him. Tulip fairly trembled with rage.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE DROPS OF BLOOD.

For a moment Tulip remained motionless, like one struck by sudden stupor. Then at last he found his tongue.

"Cold, false-hearted woman!" he cried in anger. "The Irishman was right; I need his aid. I'll be revenged upon Montgomery, even if it costs me my own life. Let me see! O'Connell said that I would find him on the balcony. I'll seek him at once."

Tulip then proceeded across the ball-room toward the door that led to the balcony.

At the door he met Stoll.

"Well?" questioned Tulip.

"O'Connell was right," Stoll said, moodily.

"Right in my case, also."

"And are you going to accept the offer that he made you?"

"Yes."

"So am I."

"Let us find him, then."

The two passed through the door to the balcony. At the lower end of the broad plaza, leaning on the railing and looking seaward, they saw the man they sought, Lionel O'Connell.

"There he is," Stoll said.

"Yes," Tulip answered, and then they hastened to him.

The two, absorbed in their search for the Irishman, did not notice that a slender female form, clad in the sable robes of "Night," had followed closely upon their heels. So close, in fact, that she had overheard every word of their conversation.

The woman dressed as "Night" followed them upon the balcony. Then, secure from observation—for the balcony held only the three men, and their backs were turned upon her—with a motion, quick as thought, she stripped the sable domino from her form, then tore the black veil from her face, and the White Witch stood revealed!

"I hold the game in my hands," she murmured, evidently under the influence of strong excitement. "Now, if I can but get Montgomery to believe my word, or if not that, to believe the evidence of his own senses, he may avoid the danger that is before him."

She watched Tulip and Stoll join O'Connell, retiring to the shelter of the doorway as she watched, so as to be secure from the observation of the three, should they chance to look in her direction.

"There is a window near them," she murmured. "By placing Montgomery at that window, he can see, if not hear. The window is not in the ball-room, but in the apartment adjoining. Now to find Montgomery, and, if possible, put him upon his guard."

Concealing the sable dress and veil beneath her own white robes, the mysterious woman returned to the ball-room.

She was not long in discovering Montgomery.

The young man was promenading up and down with the blonde beauty, Frances Chauncy, on his arm.

"Again with that girl!" exclaimed the White Witch, in anger; "the false heart who has already forsaken Tulip Roche for him, and will in turn forsake him for some other. Why should I not let these conspirators go on and strip him of his wealth? The loss of it will save him from the fatal love of this fair-haired siren. She loves but his gold, his position, and not the man. Oh, I blush sometimes for my sex; barely one true heart among a thousand false ones. But I will save him! save him from this woman, whose false love will drive him some day to despair; save him from Tulip Roche, the treacherous friend, and from Herman Stoll, the open enemy; save him from his evil genius, Lionel O'Connell, the chief of this secret League of Three, and who is more to be feared than all the rest combined. He is both lion and snake; as brave and strong as the first, as cold and bloodless as the second. If Montgomery will only believe my words, I will give him a shield against which they shall break their lance of malice in vain."

Then the White Witch proceeded across the ball-room, passed by Montgomery and Frances, who hung so lovingly upon his arm, and, as she passed, she touched the young man.

Montgomery turned at the light touch, and saw in an instant what it was that had passed him.

He half-turned as if to follow her on the moment, but he remembered that he had a lady on his arm and paused.

"Will you excuse me for a few minutes? Some one has just passed, with whom I wish to speak," he said.

"Certainly, but don't be long, Angus," Frances said, lovingly.

"I will return in an instant. Shall I conduct you to a seat?"

"No, I am tired of sitting down, I will promenade until you return," she replied.

With a bow, Montgomery retired from her side and followed the White Witch, who was walking, slowly, through the throng of maskers.

Montgomery soon came up with her.

"I have been looking for you."

"I know that," she replied.

"And you have avoided my search?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Because a witch must be mysterious in her actions; she must not be found, easily, like common mortals."

"I have been thinking over your words, and I confess I can not understand how it is that you seem to know me so well, for I am sure that you are a stranger to me."

"You are right; I am," she said.

"How, then, can you know of me?"

"Did not tell you that I am the White Witch?" she asked.

"Enough of such jesting!" he exclaimed, impatiently. "What is the meaning of all this? Is it a masquerading joke?"

"You will find that it is no jest, but sober reality," returned the White Witch, solemnly.

"Well, I—" and the beauty paused in evident confusion.

By this time, the two had reached a small ante-room leading from the ball-room.

The apartment was unoccupied.

"Here, then, we can speak freely," said the strange woman, glancing, searchingly, around her.

"I confess that you have strangely excited my curiosity," said Montgomery. "You have predicted strange and wonderful things; assailed the woman whom I love, and the man whose friendship I cherish."

"And yet I have spoken but the truth, as you will find in time."

"The woman that I love will forsake me?"

"My friend will betray me?"

"Yes, again."

"All this is very mysterious."

"And very true."

"Perhaps so."

"You will find that it is so."

"You have something else to tell me?"

"What makes you think so?"

"You touched my arm just now in passing."

That was clearly a sign that you wished to speak with me, and I take it that you are too sensible a 'witch' to wish to repeat what you have already told me," said Montgomery gallantly.

"You are right. I have something else to tell you."

"I was certain of it."

"Something to show you, perhaps."

"Feast my eyes as well as my ears, eh?"

Montgomery said, with a laugh.

"Yes."

"Well, I am ready."

"You remember my former words?"

"Within one month or one year?—yes," the young man replied.

"I predicted the loss of all that you held dear in this world."

"You did."

"But I did not tell you in what way that terrible loss would come upon you."

"Probably the reason for that is, that you do not know," Montgomery said, a slight touch of sarcasm in his tone.

"You are wrong, I do know," replied the mysterious woman, quickly.

"Elucidate—don't keep me in suspense," laughingly said the young man.

"One word does that."

"And that word?"

"Woman!"

"Oh, then it is a woman who is to bring all these evils upon me?"

"Yes."

"And yet I do not remember a single woman who will bring you to ruin in this world who is your enemy."

For a moment Montgomery was silent.

"I was perplexed."

"All this seems like a joke, but the jest is getting to be quite a serious one," he said, at length.

"For your sake, would to heaven that it were a jest!" exclaimed the masked woman, earnestly. "But, in time to come, you will find that I have only spoken the truth. This woman, who is f

high up on that limb. If old Nick hasn't lost his cunning, he wouldn't want a better chance for barking you."

The piece was brought to his shoulder, and his eye ran along the barrel for an instant, when there was a sharp, not over-loud explosion, and the tiny animal flew several inches above the limb upon which it was perched and dropped like a chunk of wood to the ground.

The hunter, without stirring from the log upon which he was sitting, deliberately re-loaded his piece, and then walked to where the squirrel was lying. Picking it up he turned it over several times in his hand, and smiled as he saw there was not a wound upon it.

The unerring bullet had struck the bark directly beneath the belly of the animal, and sent up a shower with such violence as to fatally stun the creature, without breaking its skin.

"The piece is good, and Nick Whiffles' eye is still true. Here, Calamity, you've had your breakfast, but you can take this by way of a lunch."

With which he tossed it to the pup standing at his side. As he did so, the capacious jaws of the dog opened, and it was cleverly caught between them. There was a crunching sound, and the next minute it had disappeared down his gullet.

"There ain't much symptoms of your appetite failing, pup," remarked the hunter, as he turned toward his cabin. "I don't think you'll ever die that way."

Casting his eye to the left, he saw his horse, Shagbark, lazily cropping the grass, the picture of contentment. Setting down his rifle just within the door, Nick proceeded to a large, old-fashioned box in the corner, which he opened with a rusty key that he carried about him.

Within were a number of bottles, a few Indian trinkets, and a bundle of clothes, that had belonged to a little child. There were the tiny shoes, the stockings, a handsome dress, apron and linen.

Nick was thoughtful, and his usually jocund face was sad and downcast. He held up the articles to the light, and examined them with the tenderness of a parent who had buried her child, and was now looking over the reliques left behind.

Then garments were around Ned Hazel, when I found him floating in Elk River in the canoe. I s'pose some mother has sewed 'em together, and if she's living, she is still shedding tears over the boy that has never come back to her ag'in. I feel that I have done wrong in not finding the real owner of Ned. I did try, but all the time I was praying that I wouldn't larn any thing, and I didn't. I orter tried harder; much as I love the lad, there's somebody somewhere that's got a better claim to him than I have, and if the good Lord will guide me, he shall be given back to them that he belongs to. I love him, as much as his own father or mother kin—but I've no right to keep him in the woods, when a younger of his parts is sure to make his mark in the world."

More than once while communing in this style, he brushed the moisture from his eyes, and then he attentively studied some marks upon the linen.

These marks were simply the initials "E. M.," and beyond question they were the initials of the boy who was known as Ned Hazel.

Nick Whiffles possessed little, if any, book-learning; but he was able to identify these.

"I s'pose they stand for the lad's name. E might mean Ed or Ned, and that's why I called him so. What M means, I can't figure. I didn't dare take any name beginning with that letter, for fear I might hit his ginoine figure-head, and his owner get on his track. So, he had such a puety pair of hazel eyes, that I called him Ned Hazel. Hello, Calamity, what is it?" he exclaimed, starting up, as though detected in some guilty thing, as his dog bounded into the cabin, with a whine. "Some one coming, eh? I must keep 'em out of here!"

Nick was generally self-possessed at the most trying times, but he was greatly embarrassed at this moment. Without placing back in the box the precious articles he had been examining, he let them fall to the ground, and catching up his rifle, hurried to the outside.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, as he encountered the Phantom Princess, almost upon the very threshold, and feeling the obligations of hospitality, he retreated a step or two, and invited her in.

"No," said she, halting where she stood, and seating herself upon the log that he had vacated only a few minutes before; "the day is pleasant, the sun warm, and I will sit here."

"Just as you please," said Nick, not a little relieved, as he seated himself beside her, but at a respectful distance; "you know my cabin is at your service, and I'll do any thing in the world for ye."

"I believe it, Nick; and I have come to ask you to do the greatest service one being can do another."

"Out with it, then!"

And Myra Bandman then proceeded, in a deliberate and almost emotionless voice, to relate her story. My reader has already learned it, so that it need not be repeated here.

The hunter listened, without a word or exclamation, until she was through.

"And now," she added, in conclusion, "I will tell you what I want of you. Hugh has been condemned to death, and the only human being who can extricate him from his fate is you."

"You are a sort of princess," replied Nick, leaning upon his rifle, and looking down to the ground in his gravest manner; "haven't you got the power to free him?"

"I could if it wasn't for one thing. The building in which he is now lying is the Death Lodge. Any person who is placed there is condemned to death already, and it is a part of the Blackfoot religion that he shall not escape. They will not loose him, even for me."

"Has any thing been tried on the critters?"

"Enough to know that neither he nor I can do any thing. He was the bearer of a message from Mr. Mackintosh to Woo-wol-na, our chief, and when I took the chief to the lodge, Hugh delivered it with all the impressiveness at his command, and then I added my counsel to let him go free, lest we should be visited with the vengeance of the Hudson Bay men; but all produced no effect upon Woo-wol-na; I had lured my husband on, and he had been captured and brought in. Coming as a prisoner, it is decided that he must die as a prisoner. Oh! how I have prayed, night and day, since then; but the most that I can do is to get the chief to postpone his death a few days."

"Does he know you're his wife?"

"No; I have not told him that."

"Why not?"

"It would only work ill; he would be put to instant death the moment they discovered that. Hugh knows it, and he has been careful to keep the secret to himself."

"What's your ijee?" continued Nick; "do you think I kin talk Woo-wol-na into letting him go?"

"No one can do that; nothing less than a hundred armed men could do that."

"What do you think I kin do, then?"

"With the help of Heaven, you must manage to release him by means of strategy. You have a wonderful cunning in such things; you have befriended many men in distress, and I have been told that more than once you have rescued prisoners, almost at the moment of death."

"I don't deny I've had a good streak of luck, in years past, in that sort of business; but this're thing had a harder look than many thing of the kind that I ever took hold of."

"Don't say, oh, my friend, that there is no hope!"

"I hain't said that; my principle is not to give up a chap, even arter his hair has been raised, and the critters are yelling arter him. I don't give up hope till a man has gone clean under, sure."

"Oh! what a relief your words are!" said Myra, rising to her feet and standing in front of him. "Will you do what you can, Nick, to befriend me?"

"Will?" was the firm and ready reply.

CHAPTER XV.

WILL HE SUCCEED?

NICK WHIFFLES now made Myra Bandman sit down upon the log again, while he questioned her freely and closely.

How was the prisoner guarded? Was there any one time more favorable than another to attempt a piece of strategy? Could the appliance of sudden, unexpected force accomplish it? Was Woo-wol-na to be frightened by any threats? Once outside the Death Lodge, how far must the prisoner go before reaching the shelter of the wood? Was there any reason to believe that the Blackfeet suspected that the Phantom Princess had any intention of befriending the man by action, as she had already done by word?

Did any of them know that she had gone to see him? Were her movements watched? Had any of the red-skins manifested any different disposition toward her, on account of the favorable words she had uttered? Did Miona, her daughter, know any thing of the identity of the captive? How long a respite was conceded to him?

Such, in substance, were the questions proposed by the trapper, and to them he received, in brief, the following answers:

There were always three fully-armed warriors, at least, guarding the approach to the Death Lodge, and it was by the permission of these sentinels that she herself had secured admission to him, none of them knowing the meaning of her interview with him. Beyond question, the most favorable time to befriend him was at night, as the cover of darkness was an advantage not to be compensated by any thing else. A sudden dash into the lodge by several men might succeed in getting the prisoner away before the alarm could become general; but several men were needed to accomplish this, and there was no time or means for procuring them.

These marks were simply the initials "E. M.," and beyond question they were the initials of the boy who was known as Ned Hazel.

Nick Whiffles possessed little, if any, book-learning; but he was able to identify these.

"Woowol-na was not to be intimidated by any threats, and all time spent in such attempts would be worse than thrown away. If by any possibility the outside of the Death Lodge could be reached by Bandman, he had only a short distance to run across the clearing to reach the forest, when, if the night was pretty dark, there was a chance of his getting away. It was hardly possible that any of the Blackfeet suspected the relation between Myra and her husband or that she had any real purpose of befriending him. She was so accustomed to coming and going at will that no one would suspect her even in going up Elk River and she was satisfied that no one was watching her movements.

But the earnest efforts of Myra to befriend the hapless captive, she had every reason to believe had won her the sympathy of the villagers. Woowol-na himself had given unmistakable evidence of his displeasure. Miona knew nothing at all about the matter. Should Bandman remain in the power of the Blackfeet he could not possibly escape death more than three days longer at the furthest.

"Another thing," continued Nick, when these questions had all been proposed, and answered, "have they got Hugh tied up?"

"I am sorry to say they have; he was left free until after I saw him, and then he was bound hand and foot."

"That's good; I'm glad to hear that," replied the trapper, emphatically; and noticing the look of surprise upon the face of the lady, he added, "I say it's good because if they've got him tied up, they ain't apt to watch him so close, and then we've got all the more chance to untie 'im."

"I do not see how that can be done," said Myra, "for no one can remain in the lodge long enough to unfasten his bonds, without attracting the notice of the sentinels."

Nick Whiffles smiled in his most benign manner and pointed to Calamity, who was seated on his haunches in front of them.

"There's the animal that's done the damage in his lifetime. If it hadn't been for him, I'd gone under long ago, when I was tied hand and foot by the Sioux, and when he slipped in between a half-dozen of the varmints, at night by the camp-fire, and chewed 'em loose."

The face of the Phantom Princess lit up with hope.

"Can it be possible? I never dreamed of such a thing. There are so many dogs in the village that yours could pass to and fro without alarming the Blackfeet. Then when the cords were all unfastened Hugh could make a dash out of the door, and favored by God, he might escape."

"Hold on," said Nick, in whose head the scheme was beginning to take shape, "we must try and get the varmints away from the Lodge, if only for a dozen seconds; if we can't do that, I don't see the first chance of Hugh giving 'em the slip."

The face of Myra saddened again, for the words of the trapper sorely disheartened her.

"You don't see how it can be done, but I think I do."

"Then every thing is arranged," said she, brightening up again.

"No; it ain't," was the response; "arter it's all understood between us, then Hugh has got to get the hang of things; he's got to know what to do, and when to do it to the second, or it's all up with us. Can you see him again?"

"Does he know you're his wife?"

"It is doubtful."

"If there's any other way of doing it, it will be better. Do you know how to write?" suddenly asked Nick, turning his head toward his companion with such an earnest expression that she smiled, as she answered:

"Certainly."

"I'll get you a piece of bark, and then you must scratch on it, with a sharp stone, that the pup has come to chaw off his cords, and that the minute the animal comes out he's to foller him, and rush straight for the woods—can you do that?"

"Of course."

"Wal, then, I don't know but what we might as well be off, as we need all our time."

Nick rose to his feet, and with his rifle slung over his shoulder, started in the direction of the river, the lady and Calamity following him. He was so occupied with what she had told him, that he forgot to close the door of his cabin, and never once thought of the baby-clothes that he had left out of the window.

"As they walked along they kept up their converse about the all-important matter.

Nick showed no impudent curiosity about the history of Myra and her husband; his whole mind was centered upon the task he had undertaken—that of freeing Hugh Bandman from his hapless captivity.

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SATURDAY JOURNAL.

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Foolscap Papers

My Entry into New York.

My first entrance into New York was hardly like Washington's entrance into Trenton—hardly—neither did I go in like Franklin went into Philadelphia, with a limburger cheese in one pocket, some molasses in another pocket, and two carbuncles under my arms. There was no young maid, afterward destined to become my wife, standing in a door to see and laugh at the un-white bosom of my shirt as I was approaching, or to giggle at the reverse of it when I got by—no such a thing.

When I entered New York I had nothing in my pockets but my hands, and nothing in my stomach but my appetite. How little did I think at the time that I should have one day own four blocks on Broadway! How little do I think so still!

The shoes on my feet had dwindled down to very little more than a pair of shoestrings, and the corns on my toes, which were not at all regulated by law, gave a free matine, and my elbows had the freedom of the city. I was, nevertheless, perfectly independent as I walked along the crowded streets, viewing objects which were entirely new and novel to me, letting on that I wasn't much interested in them, which I was, feeling contented with the superior education I carried with me, which I knew would set me far above the masses, and only ignorant to the fact of there being a very large old rag pinned to the lower rim of my jacket. It has been tenderly remarked since, that I looked like a walking rag-factory, but I am inclined to think there is a good deal of poetry in the expression. I remember one object that struck my observation heavily. It was an automaton figure in a show-window, that stood still and did nothing but open and shut its mouth. I stood still before it, perfectly lost in admiration of the working lower jaw. My eyes became riveted and clinched to it. I forgot my surroundings, and at the end of half an hour I recovered my eyes and looked around to see a large and interested crowd gazing at me, and to find that I had stood there letting my mouth open and shut precisely like the figure.

I walked away, and a few minutes afterward I happened to look around in front of a cigar store, and seeing a large, full-blooded Indian standing almost directly over me, with a tomahawk raised to strike me, I gave a yell, and struck out down street with such speed that I verily believe Vanderbilt would have negotiated for my purchase if he had seen me; and even to this day I never pass a wooden Indian without getting off the sidewalk. I have such a *naïve* horror for them. It was very interesting for me to stand and watch the people going along Broadway, and to reflect on the fact that not one of all that tide of humanity owed me a cent; but life was all before me, and my debts were all behind me, and there I made a vow to win a name which the little village had so lately left—I couldn't bring it along—should go into the delirium tremens to hear. I determined to write that name high and dry on the scroll of fame, before which the world should pause in its triumphal march and my coming everywhere should be welcomed by salutes of artillery—I believe I mean *sabers* of artillery. I vowed that my road should be onward and upward, however numerous the toll-gates might be on that road, or however insolent the keepers, and, fired by my noble determination, I went and hired out at a candle-factory. Yet, even then, I thought no more of being President of the United States than I might say, I do at the present time, so little do we really know of what is before us. I might, in the language of Scripture, say that even since that time I have been traveling in the Broad-way that leads to—but, upon second consideration, I take that back, for that Scriptural phrase will hardly carry out what I want to express. Anyway, I have succeeded in becoming (I flatter myself) one of the greatest men of the time. You don't know how much good it does me to say this, as is right and proper, but it makes me feel like turning a hand-spring, laying down and rolling over, and not getting up till after breakfast to say it.

I still speak to common folks, except when there is company present, and never forget the importance of my present situation, for I have built myself up, commencing at the ground, and if I am far above others, it is my own fault and nobody's else. Your nobilitated

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Author of Silent Hunter Again!

The Lights and Shades of Border and Forest Life are given a vivid portraiture in the splendid volume of the woods, soon to commence in the columns of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, viz:

THE AVENGING ANGELS;

Written by an author of much celebrity, this powerful serial will quite "lead the reader captive," and add another to the now long list of brilliants which have followed fast through the columns of THE STAR WEEKLY.

NEVER MIND.

TREAD on a woman's dress in the street, and, though she will be purple with rage, and feel ready to snap your head off, she will have politeness enough to reply, "Never mind." But does she mean it? No, indeed! It would be all right if she did, but she feels that you have deeply insulted her, and the memory of that wrong will be treasured up against you. If my sex would be more sensible, and not wear these "street-cleaners," they wouldn't have them trodden upon, and would be saved from the falsehood of "Never mind."

Go out visiting, and, feeling a little nervousness, drop the china cup—one of a very expensive set—filled with tea over the handsome damask table-cloth, ruining its beauty forever—don't you think the hostess must have the meekness of a lamb, and the patience of an angel to say, "Never mind, my dear, accidents will happen?" That remark will be said to you, but I rather think, when she is by herself, she will say: "Plague take the stupid, clumsy creature! I don't want to see her face again!"

Uncle Johns is generally kind-hearted creatures—at least mine is—and they can bear a great deal. But, it is a little too much to have their hosts need for a target, their roots to make mud-pies in, and their hats made the receptacle for candy; while they are expected to embrace the young ones all round, even though they have

been demolishing bread and molasses. Poor men! to save themselves from being called unnatural and hard-feeling uncles, they are obliged to stand it all, and exclaim, "Never mind," when, all the while they would like to take the youngsters over their knees and spank them.

Even the poor washerwoman who has labored hard at scrubbing and cleaning, so that you may look well, is obliged to say, "Never mind," when you tell her you have not any change about you. She thinks you might have more feeling, but the poor creature must not complain or there will be no work for her. She bears her burden humbly, and mutters: "Never mind."

I had been expecting a letter through the mail, from a dear friend. It was winter and the roads were blocked up for a week. As soon as they were open, I asked a neighbor if he would get "the mail for me." He returned at night, and when I asked him if he had a letter for me, he replied: "There, Miss Lawless, if I didn't forget to ask for you, I heaved a sigh, and answered, "Never mind."

It was a grievous disappointment to me, and I wished that man had a more retentive memory—if nothing besides.

A person has said, we "should say never mind" under all disappointments, yet I doubt, if he had been casting sheep's-eyes at some young damsel, and she gave him the mitten, whether he would be true to his own philosophy. But, love is always an entirely different thing from any thing else, and has naught to do with philosophy.

It would be a blessing if we could bear our trials in a more cheerful mood, and never mind the briars and brambles we have to scramble through.

Never mind if you are slighted, when you grow a little aged, and the younger generation are careless for your company; remember the Golden Gates are nearer, and a Friend is watching for you on the "other shore"—a Friend who will love you, *for yourself alone!*

Never mind if Nature has made your face plainer than that of your companions. Don't patch it up to disfigure it more, but, make your heart an honest and an upright one. A noble heart is better than a handsome face.

Never mind if your high anticipations are not always realized. You will have the proud satisfaction of knowing you have striven for the figure.

I walked away, and a few minutes afterward I happened to look around in front of a cigar store, and seeing a large, full-blooded Indian standing almost directly over me, with a tomahawk raised to strike me, I gave a yell, and struck out down street with such speed that I verily believe Vanderbilt would have negotiated for my purchase if he had seen me; and even to this day I never pass a wooden Indian without getting off the sidewalk. I have such a *naïve* horror for them. It was very interesting for me to stand and watch the people going along Broadway, and to reflect on the fact that not one of all that tide of humanity owed me a cent; but life was all before me, and my debts were all behind me, and there I made a vow to win a name which the little village had so lately left—I couldn't bring it along—should go into the delirium tremens to hear. I determined to write that name high and dry on the scroll of fame, before which the world should pause in its triumphal march and my coming everywhere should be welcomed by salutes of artillery—I believe I mean *sabers* of artillery. I vowed that my road should be onward and upward, however numerous the toll-gates might be on that road, or however insolent the keepers, and, fired by my noble determination, I went and hired out at a candle-factory. Yet, even then, I thought no more of being President of the United States than I might say, I do at the present time, so little do we really know of what is before us. I might, in the language of Scripture, say that even since that time I have been traveling in the Broad-way that leads to—but, upon second consideration, I take that back, for that Scriptural phrase will hardly carry out what I want to express. Anyway, I have succeeded in becoming (I flatter myself) one of the greatest men of the time. You don't know how much good it does me to say this, as is right and proper, but it makes me feel like turning a hand-spring, laying down and rolling over, and not getting up till after breakfast to say it.

I still speak to common folks, except when there is company present, and never forget the importance of my present situation, for I have built myself up, commencing at the ground, and if I am far above others, it is my own fault and nobody's else. Your nobilitated

As assuredly, this is hard or the assured. Besides, he can't go either by land or sea "beyond the settled limits of the United States"—which, of course, shuts him out of several of the Southern States, where things are extremely unsettled. He must not visit parts of the United States which lie south of a certain latitude, between the first of June and the first of November, although he may be totally unable to pay them a visit at any other season of the year; and he mustn't pass to California or Oregon without first getting a "permit" of the company insuring him, whether he has a railroad pass or not. This, of course, is done to make him stay at home and save his money for his own self.

Never mind if you can not wear fine clothes; endeavor to content yourself with coarser fabrics, and remember, that an uncoifed-for suit, sets not with half the grace of a paid one.

Never mind if the children do make a little noise. Think that you were once like them, and doubtless made ten times as much racket.

Never mind if some of these paragraphs come home to you; the writer herself has had the experience of many of them. She submits them to you in all kindness, even if she is,

EVE LAWLESS.

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

THE YOUNG BUCCANEER.

BY A WELL-KNOWN WRITER.

A POWERFUL AND CHARACTERISTIC STORY.

BY NED BUNTLINE.

All of which are, each in their way, well calculated to heighten the varied interest of our paper.

A HOME-LY HINT.

LET every "marriageable young lady" (in respect to age) keep in mind that, though she speaks with the tongue of a man, and is possessed with the gift of prophecy, and understands the mysteries of all languages, and all knowledges, physical and metaphysical, ornamental and musical, and yet knows not how to keep house, she is unfit to become a wife and a matron. It is easy to obtain girls and women to teach schools, to keep books, to be copyists, to sell goods, to work in factories, to work as seamstresses in shops and families, to set types, ay, to do almost any thing outside of housekeeping, and yet how exceedingly difficult it is to find one who understands the culinary art, with all the other accomplishments of good housewifery, without which all the other learned acquisitions are of little worth in a wife, and with the wifely attainments, the absence of all the others will hardly be missed, for the good housewife, fitted for her sphere, is the true gentlewoman. We would not have the reader infer that we place a low estimate upon woman's literary attainments from what we have now said. Far otherwise; for we would have every "marriageable woman" especially, liberally educated in the largest sense of that phrase; that is to say, she should be instructed in the mysteries of housewifery as well as in the arts, sciences, literature, and all aesthetic accomplishments. But a "blue" woman, who knows nothing of housekeeping, is not a helpmeet for any man who has a *stomach* as well as a soul to be cared for during his sojourn on earth. The stomach has about as much to do in the formation of the character and the reputation of a man as his creed. Hence, the cook is about as essential to the success of intellectual, moral and religious culture, as is a plain one: what man of you would not?

AS before remarked, insurance companies, as now organized, are tolerably well protected, but I propose to have a dead-sure thing, and with that view I intend to establish the

DEAD-SURE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

All policies issued by this company, under the following contingencies, will be null and void to the insured:

If he assured fights a duel and is killed.

If he isn't.

If he kills himself.

If he lets anybody else kill him.

If he "goes up" in a balloon between the first of January and the first of December.

If he is addicted to tight lacing.

If he goes to sea except by rail.

If he drinks Jersey Life Bitters.

If he eats any thing indigestible.

If he goes to Congress without the vote of this company.

If he takes part in women's rights meetings.

If his (last) breath smells of gin "sling."

If he leaves any "last words."

If he joins a militia company.

If he don't join one.

If he holds gun, face or baking-powder.

If he is blown up by a steamboat.

If he is blown up by his wife.

If he runs a steam-engine.

If he runs for office.

If he runs at the nose.

If he dies before his premiums paid exceed the amount of insurance.

If he dies after he is forty, without giving this company one year's warning.

If he don't die at all.

If he is employed on the railroad.

If he isn't employed on the railroad.

If he dies intestate.

If he dies in liquor.

If he dies of his hair.

If he accepts invitations to drink.

If he declines them.

If he is ever caught lying west of the twenty-first meridian of longitude from Washington.

If he is ever caught lying, anyhow.

If he is ever caught in Washington.

If he is hung more than once.

If he isn't hung at all.

If he dies without the consent of this company, previously obtained and indorsed upon his policy.

The proofs of death required will be:

1. Certificate from the physician who had a hand in his death.

2. A certificate from the undertaker.

3. A certificate from some responsible resurrectionist in good standing.

4. A certificate from the assured himself, to the effect that he is really and truly dead, and no shenanigan.

Terms lower than by any other company.

Agents wanted in all parts of the country, to whom we shall give fifty-five per cent of all premiums collected and no questions asked.

Special arrangements made with ex-officers of other companies who "understand the ropes" and know how to make a *big* thing.

Ministers on small salaries, school teachers, and charity collegiate students having "scruples of conscience" need not apply.

Address all communications through the publishers of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, to

THE DEAD-SURE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

BY THE "FAT CONTRIBUTOR."

INSURANCE is every thing, nowadays. If I hadn't got assurance I wouldn't attempt to assure people, I assure you. I therefore announce to the public, through the responsible and widely-circulated *Star of Journals*, the SATURDAY JOURNAL, that I am about going into the insurance business. I propose to organize myself into a company to be called the "Dead-Sure Life Insurance Company," and have called a meeting for that purpose. I give it that name because I intend to make a dead-sure thing of it—for myself.

I had been expecting a letter through the mail, from a dear friend. It was winter and the roads were blocked up for a week. As soon as they were open, I asked a neighbor if he would get "the mail for me." He returned at night, and when I asked him if he had a letter for me, he replied: "There, Miss Lawless, if I didn't forget to ask for you, I heaved a sigh,

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but one person, because he was well acquainted with the Reverdys, who accompanied her.

"That? Why, that is our entrancing guest from New York, Miss Campbell, a young Scotch lady visiting the Reverdys."

"How perfectly lovely she was as she walked quickly up to the house; I took in her exquisite toilet at a glance, and I know Dr. Chandos did the same. Some sort of a black dress it was, heavily trimmed with black satin quiltings; a bright blue sash knotted around her tiny waist; a fashionable hat of blue crepe, with a pink rose, contrasting vividly with her snow-white complexion.

She wore her skirts quite short, even for a walking-dress; and I've often wondered whether she knew how Dr. Chandos went into raptures over pretty feet. At any rate, she wore "ones," I am sure, and her instep was arched faultlessly.

She came up the steps of the piazza, and into the parlor, before the Reverdys.

At the door she saw me in the bay-window; and no one can convince me she did not know that Norman was there, too; prettily as she blushed in her confusion when she saw him.

"Oh, Miss Horton, I do so feel ashamed of being late!"

She had caught my hand and went impetuously on—a pretty, naive sort of impulse—when she looked up and saw Norman, then stopped suddenly.

"This is Dr. Chandos; allow me to present to him Miss Campbell."

She laughed, and extended her hand—a little hand, with a bright blue kid-glove on; a heavy golden bracelet above that; then a short, perfectly-rounded arm, exposed by the open sleeve that fell from it, whose dense blackness lent a pearly whiteness to her fair flesh.

"I am sorry I interrupted you, Dr. Chandos. You must pardon me."

Norman's smile was so sweet and winning when he answered:

"There is no apology needed at all. I am sure May and I feel honored by so charming an intrusion."

I can't tell why, but his courteous language seemed to hurt me; he was always so ready with a gracefully-turned compliment. Perhaps it was the coquettish glance of Winnie's eyes; but I think it was more the almost ardent admiration I saw in his face.

"We can start now, Miss Campbell, if you are ready. I suppose Harry Reverdy's bugle is at your disposal."

She laughed at what I said, although I never knew what there was comical in my remark. One thing I did know, and that was she had splendid teeth, and a mouth that constant laughing well became.

"Isn't it curious, Miss Horton? Harry Reverdy has been engaged to Kate Seaford for this picnic, so poor I am compelled to take a seat in the provision-wagon, walk to the park, or return home inconsolable."

"There is no need of that at all, Miss Campbell. My phaeton is entirely at your disposal, and May has driven Siren so many times, I think you can trust yourself to her. Bob can bring him back to the office."

Miss Campbell shrugged her shoulders a little doubtfully.

"I certainly am very much obliged, Dr. Chandos, but I never dare to ride with a lady driver. Besides, I will keep you home by that arrangement."

"I can not go at all, Miss Campbell. You had better go with May. She's very careful."

He smiled so proudly on me, that I felt I could afford to be magnanimous.

"Could you not spare a few minutes and drive Miss Campbell over? I will wait, and let Bob take me over when the phaeton returns."

"Oh, I could not think of troubling you, Dr. Chandos!"

She answered him before he had time to reply to me.

I saw a faint little flush come to Norman's cheeks.

"I think you had better, Miss Campbell. We will start immediately."

A few hasty explanations to my friends were all that was necessary, and then I watched Norman and Miss Campbell walk down the box-bordered path together.

I was getting the blues, I thought, or something was the matter, for I felt a constricted pain around my heart when I noted how Norman bent his head to talk to her, and how she kept looking up into his face with those wondrous clear gray eyes of hers.

Why did I care? Many and many a time before I had felt my heart swell with fond pride because Norman was so courtly, so elegant in the presence of ladies; and when I had seen him leaning over the chairs of other women, talking those delightful nothings, I pitied them because he did not love them, and had to force back the delusive tears that would come when I realized that he did love me; pert, insignificant me.

But now, it seemed all reversed, as if by a cruel magic. Now, as I saw him assise her in the carriage, and then seat himself beside her, I pitied myself and envied her!

From that moment my trouble began.

They drove off, and then I waited for Doctor Chandos to return; and it was an hour or more before he drove up, in a great hurry.

May, dear, I have been unavoidably detained by Miss Campbell. She was seized with a violent headache, and compelled to be taken home. It was rather fortunate she did not get to the grounds."

He was waiting by the door for me to don my hat and saucie.

"I fear my patients will be incensed at my tardiness; so you'll let Bob drive you over? I'll see if I can come after you about seven o'clock."

"Norman," I said, going up to him, and laying my hands on his shoulders, "please let me this one thing. Don't you admire Winnie Campbell very much?"

I could see a glimpse of his teeth under his mustache, as his lips parted in a smile.

"And if I do, jealous May, am I to be punished?"

"No, I am punished if you admire her too much; because, Norman, I saw in your eyes the moment you met a mutual attraction, Norman, you will love her next."

This time he laughed outright.

"Of all ridiculous affairs, this is the most ridiculous! Does the simple fact of my driving a lady home constitute disloyalty to my betrothed? Fie, May!"

I felt the hot blood rush to my cheeks under his keen gaze, half-tormenting, half-reproving.

"I don't know what I mean! I only know I am so afraid you may ever cease loving me! Norman, Norman, you'll never turn from me; it will kill me if you do!"

I think he saw the intensity of my feelings; for he put his arm around my waist, and drew me to him.

"My own darling, my own May!"

And I was perfectly content, because I loved him so; and perfect love casts out fear—the fear of doubt and untrueness.

He gave especial cautionary advice to Bob about the railway crossing, then turned to me, after I had seated him.

"May, I think it best to tell you, because there should be perfect confidence between us that I shall call, professionally, on Miss Campbell this afternoon. Headaches often are the precursors of fevers, you know!"

That horrible, cold shiver ran over me again, then I smiled back at him.

"Why should you tell me, Norman? You do not usually specify your patients and their peculiar ailments to me."

A little angry frown contracted his forehead.

"True; I beg your pardon. Take care of yourself, May. Bob, there's a train due about the time you cross the railroad; keep your eyes open."

Then he walked off; oh, so glorious in his many strength and grace; and Bob drove me off, further and further, to leave him to go visit, professionally, the gold-haired siren!

The sun didn't shine so brightly as when I had arisen; the grass seemed dull in its green livery; Bob looked uncommonly stupid, I thought, and even Siren held his head as if ashamed of somebody—me, perhaps!

Altogether the day was a miserable failure to me, though I doubt if any one noticed it, and when it began to grow toward sunset, the hour I knew Doctor Chandos took for unimportant calls, I became so strangely at unrest that I was obliged to wander off from the others, lest my agitation should be perceived.

At the appointed hour he came for me; and I noticed a slight discomfiture in his manner.

All that ride home, I wondered what was going to happen; that something was, I knew, from the gloom and distress that was settling over me.

I know I was a cheerless companion; for at length, after chatting nearly half an hour, Norman turned half-angrily to me.

"You are not yourself at all, May. What is it?"

"I don't know myself. I am certainly feeling very sadly."

He peered into my face, and I let him

treasure I possess is a dear, faded bouquet he gave me years ago, that I, in my—foolishness? had preserved.

But, I have heard of him; I know she is dead who separated us; killed by the angry hands of a man who said she was his wife over the waters.

Poor Norman!

I think of him and pray for him, and wait; lest perchance, he might come to me, one day, and I be gone.

Norman Chandos to return to me!

You ask me if I have no spirit? You ask me if I would be loved again by him who cast me off five long years ago?

I will answer you and say, I am a woman; I loved him once, I loved him forever!

When he comes to me, I will take him, thanking God for his great mercy.

How it Ended.

BY LETTIE ARTLEY IRONS.

CARELESSLY humming a strain from Norma, with hands clasped behind her, and attitude unconsciously graceful, Hildegarde Stuart stood in the bay-window of Mrs. Gordon's parlor and looked out at the passers-by.

She was transcendently lovely in her delicate Saxon style, her slender figure clad in a dress of blue silk with trimmings of rare lace, her rounded arms, bare save for the bracelets of antique cameo set in dead gold, gleaming marble-white against her azure robes. Her face was a perfect oval, with eyes blue as June skies, a pleading, childlike mouth, red as the heart of the pomegranate, and glittering, golden hair, that lay in wondrous shining waves all over her shapely little head.

She stood there just a moment; then, with a little, unconscious sigh, turned into the brilliantly-lighted room.

Russell Jocelyn, reading Tennyson by the center-table, closed his book at her approach, and rising, placed a chair for her. Tall, grave, handsome, he stood there, until she was seated, and then resumed his seat.

"Don't you think Tennyson like all the rest, Miss Stuart?" he said, opening his book, "a little unnatural?" "Elaine," for instance—do people ever die as she died, for love?"

"I think not. If she had loved Launce lot well enough to die if she lost him through

She went out, and Russell Jocelyn went

The following morning when she came down-stairs the guests were assembling for breakfast, and she took her place at the table quietly, listening indifferently to the buzz of conversation around her.

"There is a considerable difficulty in failing gracefully," Mrs. Gordon was saying, laughingly. "For my part I must confess I never could do it."

They were speaking of private theatricals of a few nights previous, in which Vivian Lebois had the part of a defeated rival in love.

"I should never be able to do it in real life," Miss Vivian replied. "In fact, I am not apt to undertake a game in which I am likely to be defeated. To try is to succeed. With me it is victory or death."

She glanced across at Hildegarde in a way that puzzled Russell Jocelyn.

"L'homme propose, et Dieu dispose," he quoted, lightly. "There are some very unsatisfactory dispensations of Providence, Miss Lebois."

She laughed, but he fancied there was a shade of triumph in her tones.

"A telegram for Miss Stuart," announced the servant, entering with a slip of paper in his hand.

Hildegarde looked up in surprise, but took the paper eagerly. There were only a few words. It read:

"Be at the E— depot at twelve to-day. Have news for you; do not wish to come up."

"Any bad news, Hildegarde?" asked Mrs. Gordon, noting her puzzled, surprised look.

"No; it is nothing of importance."

She slipped the telegram in her pocket, and finished her breakfast hastily. She was both puzzled and anxious, and took the first opportunity of leaving the house unperceived. She would not order the carriage—she wished to go unnoticed.

Half an hour after her departure Mrs. Gordon entered the parlor, with her fair forehead disfigured by a tiny frown.

"It is perfectly vexatious, Russell. Miss Lebois expects a package by express to-day, and the coachman is seriously indisposed. Would you mind driving her to the depot? She wishes to go herself."

Mr. Jocelyn looked at his sister's pretty, anxious face smilingly.

"Not in the least. I am always at your service, Vi, unless positively engaged."

"There's a dear fellow! She is ready now."

She went out, and Russell Jocelyn went

She was. But that evening, in his sister's brilliantly-lighted rooms, thronged with guests—Russell Jocelyn could not have told how it happened, but he found himself at Vivian Lebois' side almost constantly.

And Hildegarde Stuart, with a sharp pain tugging at her heartstrings, wondered why he was so cold and haughty—why he scarcely looked toward her or seemed aware of her presence. And the next day, despite Mrs. Gordon's earnest protestations, she went away—and without seeing Russell Jocelyn. Went, and left no trace of her destination.

Mrs. Gordon was puzzled, Russell Jocelyn both glad and sorry, and Vivian Lebois triumphant. It left this man whom she so passionately loved under her influence almost entirely, and who ever had withstood her?

In the days that followed, she wielded her scepter royally. Russell Jocelyn, fleeing from himself, was fain to acknowledge her rare power; she was a brilliant and fascinating woman, and she charmed him. And so, unconsciously to himself, he drifted toward her fate.

The mellow October days had given place to those of chill November; the gray, almost leafless woods, rustled drearily in the restless winds, and Aldermere, Mrs. Gordon's beautiful country residence, had its usual quota of gay visitors.

On this particular night they were dancing, and Russell Jocelyn and Vivian Lebois, to escape the warm rooms for a time, were walking up and down the piazza. They had paused for a moment in their promenade, and finished her breakfast hastily. She was both puzzled and anxious, and took the first opportunity of leaving the house unperceived. She would not order the carriage—she wished to go unnoticed.

Half an hour after her departure Mrs. Gordon entered the parlor, with her fair forehead disfigured by a tiny frown.

"It is perfectly vexatious, Russell. Miss Lebois expects a package by express to-day, and the coachman is seriously indisposed. Would you mind driving her to the depot? She wishes to go herself."

"Earlier than this, though. No one knows where she is. She disappeared rather mysteriously, I believe. Went away nobody knows where, and has not been heard from."

"Quite a mistake," Miss Lebois said, as the conversation ceased; "I have heard from her."

"She said it quietly, without looking at Russell Jocelyn."

"Indeed? See how lovely the brook looks in the moonlight!" His tone was as quiet as her own—how her heart leaped i

"He has forgotten her!" she murmured, under her breath. "Victory may be mine!"

They had reached the end of the piazza now, and she leaned against the railing—graceful, as she ever was.

"The brook seems always asking for something," she said, dreamily. "It's never-ceasing murmur reminds me of some unsatisfied want of my own heart."

She wondered, when she had said it, at her want of reticence, and still more at his silence. She little knew what bitter memories were stirring in the man's heart. It was a year ago this very night that he would have spoken his love to Hildegarde Stuart. For a whole year he had been fighting his heart, and this woman's words told him, only too plainly, that he had not conquered it. Could he succeed better with her help? She loved him, he knew.

There was a momentary struggle, then he leaned toward her in the cold moonlight.

"Vivian Lebois, will you be my wife?"

Cold words, none too warmly spoken, but the woman's heart answered them.

"Oh, Russell! yes."

Her beautiful head drooped over his hand and a burning tear fell on it. There floated out from her dusky hair a faint, subtle perfume of the rare geranium, that convulsed his heart with a sharp pang. It was Hildegarde's favorite; she had worn it that night, a year ago.

"He has forgotten her!" she murmured, under her breath. "Victory may be mine!"

They had reached the end of the piazza now,

cepted his sister on her way to the kitchen.

"Viola," he said, earnestly, "what is this mystery concerning Hildegard Stuart? Why did she leave so mysteriously, and reappear like one from the dead?"

Mrs. Gordon read her brother's secret in his face, though she was far from comprehending it all.

"Russell, I am sorry," she said, earnestly. "You know Hildegard is an orphan. Her father left fifty thousand dollars to her brother and herself. A year ago a Havana creditor appeared, and to satisfy him, and clear their father's memory, they gave him all their fortune. It just liquidated the debt, I believe. They were poor, of course, and proud, and they went West without explaining to their friends here. Six months ago a rich uncle, dying, left them each a small fortune. Hildegard wrote me a month ago for the first time, and I invited them here at once. But, what is your part of the mystery?"

"Some other time—not now," he said, dropping her hand. "It is enough that I was a blind fool."

He strode away, entering the conservatory by side door. There was some one there among the flowers; a second glance showed him the form and figure of Vivian Lebois.

"Treacherous, like all her race," he muttered, between his set teeth. "Vivian!"

She looked up hastily, revealing her face, white to the very lips, her eyes minnitarily brilliant. She came forward, pausing before him with clasped hands.

"Russell," she began, in a low, concentrated voice, "you know now that I deceived you—that I knew that was Archie Stuart at the time. I never heard that Hildegard was married either; it was a falsehood. I suppose you hate me, but it will not matter now. She paused as if choking, and unclasped her hands. They were livid with the pressure, and he saw where the nails had cut the white flesh.

"I have failed," she resumed presently, speaking rapidly, "and for it I can only offer to excuse my love for you. I will say it—I loved, worshipped you! Can you—will you—forgive me?"

The pleading appeal in her voice touched him. He took her outstretched hand in his. "Willingly, freely!" he said, earnestly, "even as I hope to be forgiven."

She bent over his hand and touched it with her lips. Then she dropped the ring he had given her in it, and turning slowly, walked out of the room.

He looked after her pityingly. He had never deemed her capable of such humiliation, and could guess something of what the struggle had cost her.

Then he thought of his freedom and of Hildegard. Did she love him? Almost as if in answer to his thought she stood before him. She started on seeing him, and drew back a little; her blue eyes drooping, her pleading mouth more wistful than ever. He walked straight up to her and took her hands in his.

"Hildegard," he said, all the deep love in his heart trembling along his voice, "I will say to-night the words I would have said a year ago. I love you, my darling, I love you! Is it too late?"

For answer she nestled her hands in his, and the little head, with its wealth of golden hair, drooped on his arm.

He lifted her face, and kissed the sweet mouth softly, thanking God for his great happiness.

Then he told Hildegard all, and in the intense happiness of the hour they yet found time for a pitying thought and word for the wretched woman, who, in her passionate love for Russell Jocelyn, had so nearly wrecked their lives.

She was not in the parlor when they returned to it, nor did she appear again that night.

But, the next morning, they found her, lying with her face downward in the murmuring brook, the waving raven hair tangled with dead leaves, the dusky eyes closed, the proud, passionate, erring heart at rest forever!

ORPHAN NELL,

The Orange-Girl:

OR THE LOST HEIR OF THE LIVINGSTONES.

A ROMANCE OF CITY LIFE.

BY AGILE PENNE.

CHAPTER XVIII—CONTINUED.

"Did you notice that lady?" asked Clark, after he had joined me, and we had again resumed our walk.

"Yes," I answered.

"Pretty, isn't she?"

"Yes, quite pretty."

"She's the daughter of one of the richest merchants in New York; one of the old families, too—none of your modern codfish or coal-oil stock."

"Ah, indeed!" I remarked. I knew well enough that he lied, but I was curious to know what he was after.

"Yes, she's a nice girl, too, not a bit stuck up. She's got plenty of money, and she knows how to use it. She drives a handsome pair of horses as trotted through Central Park. I tell you she cuts an awful 'swath,' as they say, on a Saturday afternoon at the Park. I have known her ever since we were children and went to school together."

"Ah! indeed?" I knew he was lying again, but waited patiently for him to unmask the battery, which I felt certain he was bringing to bear on me.

"Yes, we're old acquaintances, you see, though I'm poor and she's rich; but, as I said before, there's no pride about her. She moves in the best society in New York, but she's just as friendly with me as though I was worth a million. In fact, she's a devilish nice girl, as good-natured as she's pretty. By the way, I had almost forgot to mention it: she's going to the masquerade to-night."

"What, to the Academy?"

"Yes, just where we are going," he answered.

The murder was out now. I knew what the next move was going to be.

"And, speaking of that," he continued; "do you know that you made quite an impression upon her?"

"Did I?" It was the old game over again, but my friend Clark had missed his mark. I was not a "flat," or a "greenhorn" to be twisted round the finger even of a pretty woman.

"Yes, you did, upon my honor," he replied. "She wanted to know particularly

who my friend was. I, of course, put in a good word for you, and she looked quite pleased when she learned from me that you were going to the masquerade to-night, and she made me promise to introduce you to her."

"Did she?" cried I, with an innocent smile of delight.

"Oh, yes! she did!" exclaimed Clark, swallowing the bait I had offered him, and I suppose laughing in his sleeve at the easy manner in which he was going to humbug me. "I tell you, you're a lucky fellow, the gentleman up to all the dodges of the metropolitan rogues, be else but deceived?" It is astonishing how blind these cunning men are.

"Do you?" I said this in such a simple, innocent way, how could the wily "shrewd, artful Mr. Clark" the gentleman up to all the dodges of the metropolitan rogues, be else but deceived?" It is astonishing how blind these cunning men are.

"Now I'll introduce you, if you like," he said.

"I shall be delighted," I replied.

So Clark took me out and introduced the lady in the scarlet domino to me as Miss Preston. I bowed in acknowledgment. She asked the red devil to excuse her; his satanic majesty said, "Certainly." I took Miss Preston's arm, and we commenced prancing up and down the ball-room—I of course timing our walk so as to keep within easy distance of the door.

After a short conversation of about a quarter of an hour, I came to the conclusion that Miss Jennie Preston was about as neat a fop as she could possibly be without being one. It did not take me long to find out what her motive was for playing this "little game." Clark had told her that I had just returned from the gold-mines and was about rolling in wealth. I gathered this from her conversation. She tried the course usually adopted in these cases. She spoke of the wisdom of Peters' thoughts; he was right—they would not attempt to rob Vanderwilt of the will at the Academy, but would decoy him away elsewhere. The plan was excellent, but it could not succeed. Joe, Peters and myself were too strong for him to cope with.

We stepped into a store devoted to fancy goods, and bought four half-masks, all of them alike and all black. Then we left the store and strolled down Broadway again toward our hotel.

As we entered the hotel, whom should we meet right on the steps but John Peters. Peters was still sucking his quill toothpick and swinging his light cane. As we came up the steps, Peters gave Mr. Clark a searching look, but he paid no more attention to me than that I had been an utter stranger. I noticed that Clark became a shade paler as he caught Peters' eyes. It was evident that he knew the detective, but of course he could have no suspicion that Peters was on his track.

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"What is best to be done; decline this introduction?"

"Oh, no! accept it! To decline might rouse their suspicions, and our game is to let them think that every thing is going all right for them. But keep near the door, and when you hear a shrill whistle, break for the pavement instantly. Say you're sick, any thing you like, but get away. Here she comes again!"

The scarlet domino came sailing by. Clark perceived her, and, darting forward, bowed and stopped her. They stood a moment in conversation—Clark, the lady in the scarlet domino, and the man dressed as the red devil; then Clark left them and came to me.

"Now I'll introduce you, if you like," he said.

"I shall be delighted," I replied.

So Clark took me out and introduced the lady in the scarlet domino to me as Miss Preston. I bowed in acknowledgment. She asked the red devil to excuse her; his satanic majesty said, "Certainly." I took Miss Preston's arm, and we commenced prancing up and down the ball-room—I of course timing our walk so as to keep within easy distance of the door.

After a short conversation of about a quarter of an hour, I came to the conclusion that Miss Jennie Preston was about as neat a fop as she could possibly be without being one.

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entered the house. And thus they separated with kindly words, the last spoken on earth, and each sought their own apartment. In the course of an hour a deep silence reigned over the happy homestead. As the night grew deeper, heavy clouds came up from the south-west, accompanied by low mutterings of thunder, and a rapidly-rising wind that partially smothered the sound of stealthy footsteps upon the gravelled walks, as several dark and silent figures glided hither and thither amid the gloom.

But the inmates slept on, unconscious of the deadly danger that menaced. There were none at hand to warn them, for the nearest neighbor was fully ten miles distant, and so, amid the deep darkness and the crash of the tempest, was perpetrated a black and bloody deed, the details of which no man, save the fiends themselves, knew for not one was left to tell the tale.

When Henry Roysten rode home under the leafy arches of the forest next morning, his heart expanding with a joy known only to him who has told his love, and that successfully, he little dreamed of the terrible scene that the next turn of the road would bring before his eyes.

A heap of smouldering ruins, amid which could be discerned the charred remains of those he loved, was what he saw. Not a soul remained; even the faithful house-dog lay dead near the yard gate, his head cloven with a bloody ax that lay near by.

The return from supreme happiness to deep, overwhelming woe was as sudden as it was terrible. And before he left the scene to summon assistance, the light-hearted, perhaps frivolous youth, had changed to a stern, determined, implacable man, whose life was henceforth to be devoted to vengeance.

Fifteen years had elapsed since the family of Richard Roysten, at one fell blow, had been swept from the face of the earth.

In all that time Henry Roysten had searched and waited in vain, and when we again see him, after this lapse of years, he had grown strangely old, and haggard, the un-dimmed brightness of the full gray eye alone remaining to tell of a vigorous manhood wrecked in its very opening.

Since early morning, and the sun is now dropping behind a range of mountains in the west, Henry Roysten had been in the saddle. Half a hundred miles by between him and where he had built the morning camp-fire, and yet he showed no intention of halting.

He had heard that the men he sought had hidden themselves amid the wilds of the far West, then an unknown region, and like a bloodhound, he was on their trail.

Twilight deepened into night, and yet he pushed on. The stars came out and a faint line along the eastern horizon heralded the rising moon, when, from the crest of a sharp rise in the prairie, he caught sight of an object that caused him to abruptly halt and gaze intently ahead.

Seemingly, great way off he saw the flickering blaze of a camp-fire, and knew that either friends or foes were at hand. It might be white men, or it might be Indians, and hence the greatest caution was necessary.

Cautiously proceeding some distance further, Roysten dismounted, and picking his horse behind a slight rise, he prepared to reconnoiter the camp.

From a little clump of mesquit bushes he saw three persons, white men, seated around the fire busily engaged in preparing and eating their evening meal. They were rough, uncouth, and to a certain extent, villainous-looking men, but they were of his own color, and he determined on advancing.

Within twenty paces he was suddenly challenged. All three sprang to their feet, and stepped forward between him and the line of light.

A surly welcome, mingled with innumerable questions, was extended, and after returning for his horse, which he now picked up near the others, Henry Roysten sat down with his new companions to partake of their hospitality.

Now occurred one of those strange and totally unaccountable mental phenomena—if I may use the word—which man sometimes arrives at conclusions—facts we might almost say, without any apparent reason or grounds for doing so.

The rude meal had been finished, and while the others took to their pipes, Roysten spread his blanket upon the soft grass a few feet distant, and throwing himself thereon, soon became lost in one of those deep reveries that of late years had become habitual.

There was no word spoken that he could hear from where he lay, but suddenly, as though struck by an electric shock, he raised himself upon his elbow, and like a famished tiger, glared through the intervening darkness upon the trio, whose forms were dimly seen beyond the smouldering brands.

In that brief, fleeting moment, he knew that he had found the murderers of his family, the men that he had sought for fifteen years. Why he thought that he knew not, cared not! he only felt that, at last, he was upon the point of achieving the vengeance so long nursed, and every fiber of his body thrilled at the hope.

Roysten lay quietly watching his victims, as he now considered them, anxiously turning over in his mind what course to pursue. He was not long in arriving at a conclusion, and presently he arose and announced his determination of pushing on, as his horse was now sufficiently rested.

The movement was greeted with considerable surprise, and once he thought they would not permit his departure, but in this was mistaken, and, without interruption, he saddled and bridle his animal.

In the meanwhile the sky had become overcast, and the heavy masses of dark, angry-looking clouds threatened rain at any moment.

The men had noticed this, and with feelings of stern delight Roysten saw them, as he rode away, busily engaged in getting up a shelter with their blankets, etc., using their rifles and gun-rods as stakes upon which to set the tent.

His purpose was to crawl back in the darkness, and seek to learn from their conversation if his intuition was right. Out in the open this would be difficult, but when they were beneath the tent he could approach within arm's length.

In half an hour the storm burst, with torrents of rain, but unaccompanied with wind. It seemed as though fate was favoring the terribly wronged man.

The men had withdrawn under shelter, and they did not hear or see, as had not these others many years ago, the stealthy figure that glided out of the darkness and crouched down beside the tent.

For more than an hour Roysten, for it

was he remained motionless, his ear drinking in with eager avidity every word uttered by those within. And then he arose, and noiseless as a specter, he drew back until the shelter could no longer be discovered.

"Great God! I thank thee!" he exclaimed, in a low, hoarse voice, while with clenched hands above his head, he turned his face toward the blackened sky.

Patiently he waited now. Hours flew by, and yet he waited to make doubly sure that his victims would be locked in the arms of sleep. But at length the moment came, and once more, holding in his hand the bared blade of a long and deadly knife, he stepped toward the blackened sky.

Remember that I had been a lonely prisoner for six years, and only during six weeks had ever enjoyed the society of women. About ten the children and females were all sent to bed, after which the elders, including my mother, held council.

There was but one outcry, but one standing at hand could have heard a sound, peculiar in itself, a deep, heavy *thud*, three times repeated, the last accompanied by an agonizing groan; and then all was still.

A moment later Henry Roysten emerged from the tent, still bearing in his hand the knife, now dripping with blood.

Without pausing to look round, he sought his horse, mounted and rode away, taking the back trail whence he had come.

Three days afterward a party of hunters passing the spot saw a tent of blankets, near which stood three picketed horses.

Prompted by a natural curiosity, one of their number raised the fly and looked within, but instantly recoiled, uttering an exclamation of horrified surprise.

The frail shelter was instantly torn down, and there lay three bodies stark in death, each with a ghastly wound directly over the heart.

The great head of the tribe, Captain John Thomas, had come to the burial service?

"Then thus began my father!"

"Alfred, you love your cousin Polly?"

"I do," I said, blushing crimson.

"In a primitive state of existence like ours," continued my father, "we must depart from those rules which govern civilized States of older growth. Marriage was instituted for the protection of society and the form is necessary, in an advanced age, to make it binding, and to protect the woman. But where we have no laws and no legal ministers, we must make laws for ourselves. Captain John Thomas, you have often read the burial service?"

"Often, sir," he replied, with a grim smile.

"Then, one month from this, when the young couple have got themselves a house, you shall read the marriage service, and the marriage shall, under the circumstances, be as good and valid as it said by bishop or deacon."

I pressed my father's hand, and wept for joy. It was too much happiness. I could scarcely believe it.

Then, with a view to prepare for the next day, all retired, though I crept into the palm grove, where, seated under the shade of a spreading tree, Polly awaited me. And there, under a glorious tropical sky, with the stars shining down upon us, with a reflected moon sailing across the mighty heaven, I told the story of my love, and won her dear consent to be my wife.

With true womanly feeling, she would have rather had the sanction of the church; but when I fully explained the nature of my father's statement, when I assured her that to live without her was impossible, she yielded, and was mine.

"But how have you done without me all this time?" she said, archly.

"I have hoped. Nothing has supported me but, first, the hope, and then the certainty, that you were alive."

"Platterer!" she said, and as the gray dawn came up in the eastern sky, we parted, not to seek rest, but to rouse the negroes, and prepare breakfast.

We kept apart that morning. Our happiness was too great for words. We should have betrayed ourselves had we not hustled about; and there was one beautiful but sad eye which seemed as if it had not slept, and which, dear to me as a darling sister, I could not bear to look at. But she, too, hustled about, and made herself useful, looked after the children, helped to load the animals, and when the word was given to march, took two little ones by the hand, and led them on their way.

I could not help thinking, as we advanced along, that we looked much as Adam must have done when his family began to increase, or like Noah, after he had left the ark. It was a patriarchal sight, and the faces of all were so wonderfully happy, that a brighter picture could scarcely have been witnessed.

I led the way, with my gun on my shoulder. I was universally recognized as chief, while my elders were my prime ministers. By my side walked Polly, while next came my mother, mounted on the zebra, which no one could sufficiently admire.

The mid-day rest was taken under some steep, and beetling rocks, that gave good shelter from the noonday sun.

Four hours renovated both man and beast, and by a good march in the cool of the evening, the spot was reached whence next day we were to take our departure for the island.

They could see it even in the dull light; but such was the eagerness of all, that they would gladly have done without their rest to have gone over at once. But the elders objected, while the fact was, the tide also was beginning to rise, so nothing could be done but take rest.

It was past the meridian when I guided them, after leading them a little further to the northward, to the bay where I had seen Pablina escape from the Fan Indian encampment. All were struck with its beauty, and I resolved to guide them by this route to our new residence, taking my island home by the way.

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TO MY FAIR AND ANXIOUS INQUIRIES.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

Since many most beautiful misses are anxious to know who Joe Jot is, and who, guessing what kind of look his is, are sure to guess that which is not his, I sit down in front of my picture—
To tell in a rhythmic lecture—
If I'm man, beast, rhinoceros, horse,
But I beg to infer I'm a man,
In the general term's acceptation,
Or I try to be, much as I can,
And am in my own estimation,
At least as good as any man,
If there is more or less than myself;
I'm a good-natured, kind-hearted, kind one,
And pay all my debts—when I've paid.
My height is five feet six and a fraction;
Trim built; constitution quite hearty;
Conscience, in excellent action;
Gravitation, a hundred and thirty;
Hair, black as an extra-dark coal;
Falling over my shoulders, and waving,
In texture as "fine as a fiddle."
Eyes dark as the hour before day,
But bright as a new five-cent nickel,
Full of love that will not fade away,
But empty of love that is fickle.
Never seen a man more worth let me tell,
All that is sweet and human,
Though none was e'er fashioned so well,
It remains to be kissed by a woman,
My age—well, I yet shall be older,
And I wouldn't much like to be younger;
No head over laid on me, and
Never seen a man more fit of hunger.
My voice is the sweetest of many,
Yet it never had breathed in an ear,
Love's words, which are dearest of any.
For where is the maiden who'll hear?
But there now, I think that you have me,
At least in one sense of the phrase,
Though you're the only one to save me,
For after all—all that I can see,
This living alone isn't funny,
With nothing to cheer me but fancy,
And nothing to strive for but money.
The fact is, I'm always too modest;
I would blush at a hair-pin, I'm sure;
But I've a heart full of feelings and pure!
And girls, let me say, I love you all.
But the thought that is the saddest of any
Is, the laws of our land are so cruel,
They won't let a man marry many!

A Bold Game.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

"He still lives!"
The speaker was a portly, middle-aged man, and clad in the demi-military costume worn by the nobility of England during the last several decades of the eighteenth century.

The alchemist cast a look of surprise upon his midnight visitor, and spoke in a voice which seemed to emanate from the grave:

"Then Thurston has counteracted the virus."

"He has, curse him!" hissed the other.
No better chemist than the physician lives in England. He made toxicology a specialty in the royal institute, and he is famous for his Mithridates. You could not have him discharged?"

"I could not. Henry will have no physician near his bedside but Thurston. And that girl, Ethel, is rarely absent from his chamber. She suspects me."

"Ha! think you so, Sir Lloyd?" cried the breathing relic of the birth of a century.

"I do. But enough of this. He must die. Morford's Pride and Ethel of Moosbrooke must be mine."

"You came hither, then, for that which will speedily put you brother beyond the reach of all the medical lore in Christendom?"

"I did." The alchemist rose and tottered across the room to a steel-bound chest. Relieving it of small vial, he returned to his arm-chair, and held the vial between Sir Lloyd and the lamp.

A greenish liquid containing hundreds of tiny air-bubbles greeted the would-be-fratricide's vision.

"This liquor," said the old man, gently shaking the vial, "is Death's best earthly agent. Two drops will send the soul across the Lethean tide."

Sir Lloyd snatched the poison from the alchemist's hand, and kissed the vial.

"This shall, place in my hands every thing I covet!" he cried. "How must it be administered? Speak, Bonfonti!"

"Permit two drops to fall upon your brother's lips, and he's in heaven."

"It shall be done!" exclaimed Sir Lloyd, rising, and carefully putting the vial in an inner pocket. "And when Morford's Pride is mine, ten thousand pounds shall become yours, my good Bonfonti."

The old man chuckled with great glee, and saw his murderous visitor depart.

"Ten thousand pounds! Why, it will wait me back to my native country. I must see Naples before I die."

"Ethel, were my brother to die, would you become mine?"

"No; I will bury my love in his grave." The answer was firmly but gently spoken, and not calculated to rouse the anger of any man.

But it maddened Sir Lloyd of Lorne. He bit his nethermost lip till the crimson current burst forth, then walked away, leaving the beautiful girl alone in the arbor.

"What! wed you, Lloyd of Lorne?" she hissed, gazing after his retreating figure.

"Never! You covet these broad acres and my smiles. The former may fall into your clutches some day; but the latter, never! I am not unaware of the accused fact that Lord Henry has been poisoned. The virus still remains unconquered; but Doctor Thurston and myself are overcoming it. Whose hand administered the fatal draught? Yours, Sir Lloyd—his brother. For long weeks I have watched you, tided villain, and I will continue to do so, until Henry calls me wife. And you have asked me to become your bride—yours, a fratricide's. Should Henry die, I will erase every lineament of beauty from my face, and you shall shrink from me with horror. You rode like the wind last night toward London, the dwelling-place of that old alchemist, Bonfonti. What sought you there, Sir Lloyd? Poison. Ha! I will watch you as the savage watches his enemy."

Execute your deep-laid plans to the letter, Sir Lloyd, of Lorne, or Morford's Pride will never be yours.

"How does Lord Henry seem at this moment, Agnes?" said Sir Lloyd, pausing at his brother's bedside, and addressing the little maid who sat near.

"He sleeps," was the response, in a low tone.

Lloyd bent over the couch and gazed in silence upon his brother's wasted form. Long weeks of suffering had Lord Henry experienced, and the poison administered by his brother's hand had brought him very near the gates of death. But, thanks to Doctor Thurston's knowledge of the antidotes of poisons, he was slowly recovering, and bade well to leave his couch the current month.

"Agnes, I know you have grown weary of watching in this close room," said Sir Lloyd, suddenly turning from the bed. "Do you go out and inhale the fresh air. I will watch my dear brother during your recreation."

Ethel bade me remain here until she returned," said the maid. "She rode over to Moosbrooke an hour ago. She said that you had gone to London."

A strange smile suffused the poisoner's face, at Agnes' last words, and again he entreated her to leave her post that he might commit his secret to her.

"Now is my time," muttered the poisoner. "I fain would do this deed at night; but then he is either guarded by Thurston or Ethel. What I would do must be done quickly, for Agnes and Ethel may return at any moment."

He drew the little vial from his pocket and stepped to the side of the curtained bed. His brother slept, unconscious of the fact that he was nearer death than he had ever been.

"But two drops," the poisoner muttered, as he poised the vial above his brother's lips.

His hand shook like an aspen bough, for conscience, for the first time, was tugging at his heart-strings. But after a desperate fight he vanquished the sweet angel, and again returned to his work.

With the pace of a snail a drop of the green poison approached the mouth of the vial, and at last trembled upon the rim. Sir Lloyd watched it with an eagerness born of hope, and held his breath as it descended.

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